

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICING

(Mr. MURPHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, Americans purchase 68 percent more prescription drugs today than they did just 10 years ago, and at the same time, retail prescription prices have risen three times the rate of inflation.

How can people afford the medication they need? Some propose price controls, others want the government to pay, but let us also give the power to the patient. Whether we are buying groceries or clothes or cars or even airline tickets, when consumers can compare prices they can drive those prices down. Why not do the same for prescription drugs?

Today, many State governments are setting up Web sites for consumers to compare drug prices in their area. These Internet sites help patients to shop smarter and get more affordable choices. One study found that Web sites offering drug comparisons can save patients as much as 40 percent. Congress should support public-private partnerships for sharing online information to help lower these costs for consumers. I urge my colleagues to learn more about how informed consumers can lower their costs on prescription drugs by visiting my Web site at murphy.house.gov.

RECORD TRADE DEFICIT

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, well, the Bush administration set yet another record yesterday. Congratulations to the Bush administration. We set the highest 1-month trade deficit in the history of the United States, eclipsing the highest deficit figure previous record which was set last month.

We are headed toward a \$718 billion trade deficit this year. We are borrowing \$2 billion a day from people overseas to buy things made overseas that used to be made here, and they keep standing up on that side of the aisle and saying what is wrong with Americans, can't they see the economy is booming? Yes, it is booming, we are borrowing money overseas to buy goods overseas, and that makes it look like a booming economy while people are losing their jobs here in America, 3 million manufacturing jobs left, and these trade policies are driving down wages in this country.

That is their idea of a successful economy, because the CEOs and a few investors are doing really well. It is a disaster. No more record trade deficits. We need a new trade policy for this country.

HONORING RALPH H. BAER

(Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ralph H. Baer of Manchester, New Hampshire who has recently been named the recipient of the National Medal of Technology. Mr. Baer has achieved great success, and his home State is extremely proud of him.

Mr. Baer left Nazi Germany with his family at the age of 14, and moved to Manchester in 1955 to work as a chief engineer with Transatron, Incorporated. He later joined Sanders Associates as a staff engineer to manage the equipment design division. Since 1975, he has successfully owned and operated R.H. Baer Consultants.

The National Medal of Technology has been bestowed by the President since 1985 as the Nation's highest award for innovation. The award was mandated by Congress in 1980 to recognize the significant contributions that America's leading innovators have made to the Nation's economic strength and standard of living. The National Medal of Technology laureates are also recognized for innovation that has revolutionized communication, education, entertainment, medicine, and transportation.

I applaud Mr. Baer for his creativity and the risks he took in his career. Technological innovations like those developed by Mr. Baer have allowed the United States to continue to break down the barriers to scientific advancement. I am honored to recognize his contributions to science and our Nation.

TRADE POLICY

(Mr. FOLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FOLEY. Madam Speaker, I enjoyed my colleague's tirade on trade. He says there is too much coming in, but they consistently vote against any going out. They do not assist us in the trade policy that will bring balance to trade.

What have we done positively? Let us talk a little bit about the economy. GDP is up. The stock market is nearing 11,000. Not since 9/11 have we seen such a robust economy. Consumer confidence is up. Gas prices are subsiding. Unemployment in Florida and the Nation is the lowest it has been in decades; and the Nation is at an all-time high in prosperity index. We have had job creation; and, yes, we have had tax relief, giving people their own money back to spend in their communities. That is leadership.

If you listen to the other side of the aisle, it is a pity party, it is pessimism, it is negativity, and it seems to spawn itself to a defeatist attitude whether it

is about the war in Iraq, or the health of our economy. We have got a lot to boast about, and I think it is important that national leaders stand up and talk about the great things that are happening in this country. I applaud what we have done. Reflective in the numbers we have shown leadership, the Nation is stronger than ever, our economy is better than ever, and I think we all ought to wish people a Merry Christmas as we head into a prosperous season.

RECOGNIZING MAGNET AMERICA

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a wonderful family-owned business headquartered in the heart of North Carolina's Fifth Congressional District.

Magnet America based in King, North Carolina is the original creator of the yellow Support Our Troops ribbon car magnets. All of their products are made in the U.S.A., and all of their employees are true American patriots.

This company is exceptional because it serves as a fund-raising tool to help the families of our troops and to send care packages to those serving overseas. The company has had an amazing success story. Dwain Guillion first made the ribbon magnets to sell at his family's Christian bookstore. The idea took off when he sent a box of 50 magnets to a national convention of Vietnam veterans. Within weeks, he was getting orders from all over the country. By 2004, his company had 150 employees and was shipping more than 100,000 magnets per week.

It is unfortunate that Chinese knockoffs of their designs are having a negative impact on Magnet America's business. It is my hope that people will visit www.magnetamerica.com and support this great American company.

IRAQ'S PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

(Mr. CONAWAY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONAWAY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Iraqi people. Today, millions of people in Iraq are headed to the polls to cast their vote for a free and open society. This vote stands directly in opposition to the prior government which was predicated on terror and fear, and ruled by the iron fist of one of the world's most vicious dictators. This is the most powerful blow to the terrorists and rejectionist elements of the Iraqi insurgency to date. Iraqis are determining their own destination, their own destiny, and by doing so they have reached an important benchmark drawing the U.S. closer to victory and reducing American presence in Iraq. Today's parliamentary elections in Iraq

have the makings of a watershed moment in history, not only for the Middle East, but for the long-term security of the United States.

A democratic Iraq is absolutely essential to winning the global war on terror. Now, more than ever, America's leaders must stand united behind the Iraqi people as they venture forward in the hope for a better future.

IRAQI ELECTIONS

(Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, what a difference 2 years makes. In August of 2003, I was in Iraq, and every Marine I met wanted to show me the field that Iraqis began digging in as soon as they took control of it. A mass grave was there with 3,000 bodies, part of the 400,000 to 500,000 mass graves around the country. This hopelessness has really driven the Iraqis to embrace the freedom that our brave soldiers have given them the opportunity for. That is why, as we stand here today, millions of Iraqis, Shia, Sunni, Kurds are giving the terrorists the finger, the ink-stained finger voting for the third time this year, and as they do that, they are piercing through the hopelessness that breeds terrorism. They are giving themselves the opportunities for a better life. They are transforming a region. They are making America safer. We applaud the Iraqis. We thank the American troops that have made this possible.

MEDICARE PART D

(Mr. GINGREY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GINGREY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to encourage all Americans to talk with their loved ones about Medicare part D, the new voluntary prescription drug benefit available to all seniors.

Now is the perfect time to assist a senior with this important decision. After all, many of us are about to spend the holiday season with several generations of our family, and it is easy to help. In fact, this past weekend, I help my mother, Helen Gingrey, enroll in a Medicare part D plan. Now, my mother is in her eighties, and while she is a sharp lady, she is not very familiar with computers, but together, we visited the Web site www.medicare.gov, and walked through the enrollment process. It took less than an hour, and now starting January 1, my mother will have affordable prescription drug coverage.

If everyone in our community took the time to assist just one senior in this way we could help millions of seniors get access to the prescription drugs they need to stay well. Seniors can choose a plan and enroll by visiting the Web site www.medicare.gov, or by calling 1-800-Medicare.

Madam Speaker, I encourage all Americans to help a senior in their lives with this important health care decision.

NEITHER PEACE ON EARTH, NOR GOODWILL TOWARD MEN

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Madam Speaker, today Republicans propose to criminalize those who offer the slightest help to undocumented immigrants—water to the thirsty or food for the hungry. Church members could become felons for their faith, facing 5 years in prison.

So if on some silent night, when all is calm and all is bright, a young man and a clearly pregnant woman from out of town ask if they can rest by your manger, be warned: first verify their visas.

With similar zealotry to preserve the right to torture, cut food stamps and deny aid to abused and neglected children, these same folks publicly preach that it's the rest of us who have forgotten the meaning of Christmas.

But this year the Administration's true Christmas tidings seem to be—“Neither Peace on Earth, nor Goodwill Toward Men.”

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STRONG ECONOMY

(Mr. SHAW asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SHAW. Madam Speaker, with Christmas just around the corner, the latest economic indicators are welcome gifts to the American people. In the last 5 years, this country has endured terrorist attacks, stock market decline and natural disasters. Yet despite all of this, the latest numbers show that our economy is strong and it is getting stronger.

Just in time for holiday travel, gas prices continue to decline and are down nearly 23 cents in the last 4 weeks. Sales of new homes rose 13 percent in October, which was the largest monthly gain in 12 years. Finally, nearly 4.5 million jobs have been added in the last 2½ years. We have even seen an impressive 200,000 jobs per month.

And, State and local revenue has risen 7.2 percent. In fact, in my State of Florida, we expect a surplus of more than \$3 billion.

These positive numbers are the result of Republicans' pro-growth economic policies. The Democrats, however, believe that a good gift is to continue to tax and spend.

Madam Speaker, right now we have a strong, vibrant economy. Republicans remain committed to these policies that will endure and all Americans can realize the American dream and have a merry, merry Christmas.

RESPECTFUL BORDER SECURITY

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, we are all descendants of immigrants—legal immigrants. America is a good and a generous Nation. We open our arms to the world. It is that spirit that makes us unique, inviting and vulnerable.

The world has changed. Our borders must be secure for our Nation to be secure. This week we finally have an opportunity to fulfill our responsibility to our constituents. We have an opportunity to address the issue of border security for the first time in years.

Madam Speaker, if our borders are not secure, our Nation is not secure. A solution to this crisis is being demanded by our constituents. This should be a positive action. It should be one respectful of history and all Americans.

I urge my colleagues to be respectful of the institution, to be respectful of the wonder of the deliberative process, to be respectful of motive, to be respectful of each other. Madam Speaker, it is time we take the honorable steps necessary to ensure that our borders and our Nation are secure.

IRAQ AND IMMIGRATION

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, the world is watching democracy in action today. I applaud our Iraqi allies and thank our men and women in uniform for making this historic election possible. We are reshaping a region responsible for creating terrorism that murdered nearly 3,000 Americans on September 11. Today's election is a step in the right direction.

Madam Speaker, I also want to commend Chairman SENSENBRENNER for leading the House in the effort to get a hold on our illegal immigration problem. In both the 108th and 109th Congresses, I introduced the Federal Contractors Security Act to tackle the problem we have seen, a documented and publicized problem, of illegal entrants working for Federal contractors at critical infrastructure sites.

I am pleased the Judiciary Committee inserted many of the provisions of my bill into H.R. 4437 to implement the worker verification system. Chairman SENSENBRENNER listened to our concerns and his bill will do so much to address the problem of illegal entry into this great Nation.

IRAQI PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)